

Participle- brush stroke

Participle brush strokes are participles (verbs with -ing or -ed) used at the beginning or the end of the sentence. (They are not used as the predicate of the sentence.) Participles look like verbs, but act like adjectives as they describe a noun in the sentence.

The moose charged him again, **using her head and front hooves, slamming him back and down into the water.** – *Gary Paulsen*

Examples:

Roaring a loud warning screech, the elephant charged the lions. (participle brush stroke phrase) **Trailing, tracking, accelerating**, the cheetah gained on the injured zebra. (3 participles used together for effect)

Confused, the man wondered if she could ever reciprocate his secret love for her.

Write your own examples below.

Absolute- brush stroke

An absolute is a noun and a participle. Some writers put one or two absolute brush strokes at the beginning or end of sentences.

A dozen volcanic faces with fiery eyes crushed close to the window, **fists hammering the glass.** –*Ray Bradbury*

Examples:

Heart pounding, arms stretching, the skydiver glided toward the earth from 20,000 feet.

Feet stomping, ears flapping, the elephant charged the lions.

Outcome decided, the players returned to the locker room to rehash their defeat.

Write your own examples below.

Appositive- brush stroke

An appositive is a noun that refers to another noun directly in front of it. Think of the appositive brush stroke as a noun phrase that is acting like an adjective. Commas usually set off appositives in a sentence.

Charles Beckendorf, **senior counselor for the Hephaestus cabin**, would make most monsters cry for their mommies. - *Rick Riordan*

Examples:

The elephant, **an angry 1,200 pound beast**, charged the lions.

The newborn harp seal, **a tiny creature with snow-white fur**, nestled in the snow.

Write your own examples below.

Adjectives Out of Order- brush stroke

Adjectives add detail to sentences, but often a string of three adjectives together sounds like a list. Experienced writers often shift some adjectives away from the usual before-the-noun position, to put them after the noun. This breaks up a string of adjectives and is called the adjective out of order brush stroke.

More tormentors, Buck decided, for they were **evil-looking** creatures, **ragged and unkempt**. – *Jack London*

Examples:

The **angry** elephant, **monstrous and fierce**, charged the lions.

The **metal** steam shovel, **large and powerful**, dug into the ground.

Write your own examples below.

Action Verb- brush stroke

Being Verbs

Being verbs are forms of the verb to be: is, was, were, are, am and others. They are necessary in writing, but replacing them with action verbs makes your writing stronger and more vivid for your reader.

Action Verbs

Action verbs are like engines. They move noun images into action as in these examples: “The car screeched. The dog howled. The eagle soared.”

The Bumpas women, their lank hair streaming down their red necks, **cackled** fiendishly. – *Jean Shepherd*

Examples:

The elephant **attacked** the lions.

The cold wind **whipped** along the backside of the tent.

Write your own example below.
